

**Bellevue
Utilities**

**Strategic
Plan
Update
2006**



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Message from the Director

Bellevue Utilities has a long history of talented, dedicated and passionate staff. We strive to hire and train the best, and our work greatly influences the natural and developed environment. We have talent and purpose. What could we be lacking? What transforms a first-class collection of people into a first-class organization is a common purpose and direction. A strategic plan is a key element to making that transformation happen. It provides a vision and aligns our goals and priorities.

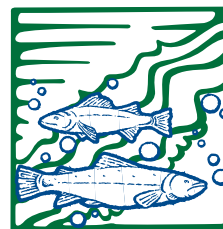
This Strategic Plan will make a difference. It will change the way we approach our jobs and career development. It will change the way we deliver our programs and services. That is what a strategic plan is all about. It aligns our work and prepares us for our future, the future of current and successive generations, and the future of our professional successors.

To be successful, strategic planning must be a continuous process. We will continue to update our Strategic Plan periodically by looking at changing issues that affect us, evaluating if we are still on target, and assessing if we are living our mission and values.

Thank you for your openness and willingness to evolve. These qualities have helped make this the great organization it is today. Please join me in working to make it even better.

Best regards,

Denny



Introduction

Meeting the Community's Vision is Bellevue Utilities' ultimate goal; this Strategic Plan is a major tool to help us in that endeavor. This Strategic Plan is intended to work in concert with the goals and missions of the City and of other departments. We are One City.

This update is focused on the development of strategic investments and emphasizes their role in preparing us for the future. It incorporates past work that defined the Utilities' mission, community vision and values. Some of these elements have been refined to reflect organizational or community changes.

Why do an update now? The original strategic plan included direction to periodically evaluate the organization's direction and update our strategic investments accordingly. Our objectives are to:

- Collaborate across the organization for improved service delivery.
- Align available resources to implement strategic investments and prepare for future challenges.
- Ensure the plan is inclusive, reflecting the broad scope of Utilities' services.

How should this Strategic Plan be used by Utilities?

- To confirm or revise the programs and services Utilities provides.
- To develop the organization to most effectively deliver programs and services.
- To guide development of work plans and budgets that reflect strategic investments.

The following pages comprise the first major update to the original strategic plan, developed in 1997. This Strategic Plan includes:

- Reaffirmation of the Community Vision.
- Redefinition of Utilities' Mission.
- Linkage between the Community Vision and Utilities' Programs & Services.
- Reaffirmation of our Core Values, with Utilities-specific strategies.
- Six Strategic Investments.

Community Vision

The following Community Vision statements were developed with feedback from our customers:

- A reliable supply of safe, secure, high-quality drinking water that meets all of the community's water needs.
- A reliable wastewater disposal system that ensures public health and safety, and protects the environment.
- A surface water system designed to achieve fishable and swimmable waters¹, and eliminate damage from storms.
- A convenient, unobtrusive solid waste collection system that contributes to a healthy and pleasing cityscape in an environmentally sensitive way.
- A safe and well-maintained transportation system that supports livable neighborhoods and a vital economy in partnership with the community².
- A reliable, cost-effective fleet and communications infrastructure that supports the City's service delivery goals.

Notes:

1. Goals of the Federal Clean Water Act
2. Adapted from the Transportation Department's Mission Statement

Mission Statement

Bellevue Utilities delivers exceptional services for our community.

Working together to actively support neighborhood livability, a healthy, sustainable economy, and the environment by effectively managing:

- Drinking water
- Wastewater
- Surface water
- Solid waste
- Street, walkway and bikeway maintenance
- Fleet and communications infrastructure



Programs & Services

The following table is presented to show the linkage between Utilities' Programs & Services and the Community Vision. These are the Utilities' major program areas that serve the public.

Solid Waste	Water	Wastewater	Surface Water	Streets Maintenance	Fleet & Communications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services • Emergency Management & Security • Environmental Protection • Financial Management • Intergovernmental Relations & Regional Planning • Public Information • Regulatory Compliance 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventive Maintenance & Repair • Capital Planning, Project Design & Construction Inspection • Comprehensive Planning • Development Services • Private Systems Advice • Senior/Disabled Discounts Program • Service Installations • System Location Services • System Operations & Control • System Renewal and Replacement • Utility Billing & Customer Service 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garbage, Recycling & Yard Debris Collection Oversight • Solid Waste Planning & Services • Special Collection Events • Waste Prevention & Recycling Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backflow Prevention • Drinking Water Quality • Meter Reading • Water Conservation • Water Supply Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flow Monitoring for Inflow & Infiltration • Industrial Waste • Septic Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodplain Management • Pollution Prevention • Private Systems Inspection • Stream Habitat & Salmon Monitoring • Stream Quality & Flow Monitoring • Stream Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graffiti Removal • Ice & Snow Response • Pavement Markings & Street Signs • Roadway, Walkway & Bikeway Maintenance • Street Sweeping • Vegetation Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment Purchasing, Installation & Disposal • Equipment Replacement Management • Fuel Management • Motor Pool Management • Vehicle Forensic Investigation

Core Values – A Summary

The following Core Values are the essential and enduring principles that guide our individual actions, our interactions and our decision-making in Utilities:

Exceptional Public Service

We deliver outstanding service to the customer.

Commitment to Employees

We value all employees and their contributions and treat each other with caring and respect.

Stewardship

We preserve and enhance the community's environmental, financial, human and physical resources.

Innovation

We encourage and reward ideas and solutions.

Integrity

We are trustworthy, truthful and ethical.

Safety

We value safety and security.

The Utilities' Core Values mirror the City's Core Values, with the addition of the Safety value. While the City integrates safety as a fundamental element of all its programs, Utilities chooses to emphasize safety separately to reflect our responsibility for public works lifelines and our significant field operations, for which safety and security are primary program elements.

In the Core Values Appendix, you will find our strategies for how we express these values in every action.



Strategic Investments

A major portion of this Strategic Plan is the compilation of the Strategic Investments that follow. These six Strategic Investments are intended to achieve long-term goals and it may take several years to make significant progress on any one of them. Commitments to allocate financial and/or staff resources will be made as part of the budget and work planning processes. Implementation of Strategic Investments will:

- Cross division lines
- Span several years
- Have staggered starts and varying rates of progress

The Vision provided for each Strategic Investment is a brief statement of the ideal state of being we desire to attain. It may be impossible to fully reach a Vision; however, it is important to articulate it so everyone clearly understands the goal and we use it to guide our actions.



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Strategic Investment	Description	Vision
Customer Service Improvements	<p>Deliver exceptional customer service by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and anticipating the needs and desires of internal, external, regional, and other customers and stakeholders, including those of multi-cultural and multi-lingual communities. • Using communication and investigation methods to assess how current service offerings are meeting customer needs, and to evaluate service delivery efficiency, effectiveness and quality. • Determining customer service gaps, identifying any service levels that may need to be reduced or increased, and continually making adjustments to improve effectiveness. • Considering alternative service delivery options, efficiencies, long-term affordability, and quality of service delivery in meeting customer expectations. • Using outreach to educate, inform and engage customers as partners in Utilities' initiatives. <p>The approach will improve customer service across divisions and support the City's Service First model.</p>	<p>Customers who understand and are satisfied with Utilities' services</p>
Infrastructure Asset Management	<p>Develop a Utilities-wide infrastructure asset management program to guide replacement or repair decisions for all constructed and natural system components (e.g., pipes, streams, fleet and communications).</p> <p>The program will result in a systematic approach to ensure replacement or rehabilitation of system components before asset failure, prevent unacceptable risk of failure, and prevent substandard service delivery.</p> <p>This program will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating existing asset inventory, attribute information and condition data. • Determining the gaps in the asset inventory, attribute information and condition data, and developing a plan to collect missing information or data where warranted. • Defining the required sustained level of service of asset components. • Defining how critical each asset is to sustained performance, based on the consequence of its failure. • Establishing decision and prioritization criteria based on risk, investment, life-cycle costs and customer needs for optimal system management. • Integrating findings into comprehensive plans. • Developing budget/funding strategies to support strategic asset management into the future. • Incorporating the program into work plans. • Developing performance metrics for the program, for periodic evaluation. 	<p>An Optimized Infrastructure</p>

Strategic Investment	Description	Vision
Integrated Water Resources	<p>Develop an approach to water resource planning and management that recognizes relationships between water systems (drinking water, waste-water, surface water and groundwater) and water uses (consumption, natural resources, public safety and other beneficial uses).</p> <p>This approach will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the influence of regional partnerships and global issues, such as climate change or economics, in developing long-term, sustainable water resource strategies. • Integrate various planning components (e.g., regional plans, comprehensive plans, land use plans, capital investment programs and asset management) to assure impacts or efficiencies between water resource programs are identified and managed. • Develop tools and operational guidance elements for integrated water resource management for both constructed and natural systems (e.g., policies, practices and procedures). • Cultivate awareness within Utilities and across the City to emphasize the interdependencies of water resources, so that decisions are made after evaluating impacts to all systems, rather than focusing on a single water resource. 	Water Resource efforts that are integrated with City and regional processes, balanced with competing interests, and appropriately resourced
Emergency Management Program	<p>Develop a Utilities-wide emergency management program and culture that integrates the various efforts of the divisions and the City.</p> <p>The program will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation : Reducing the potential impacts of an emergency or disaster by taking pre-incident actions to reduce vulnerabilities. • Preparedness: Installing and maintaining policies, procedures, training, technologies, facilities, equipment and supplies that optimize response and recovery. • Response: Securing public safety, limiting property and environmental damage, reducing City liability, and protecting continuity of service delivery. • Recovery: Restoring community, commerce, service delivery systems and resources. • Review: Evaluating program effectiveness for possible improvements after an event. <p>The program will establish organizational structures and processes that identify and implement best management practices for emergencies and result in Utilities being better prepared to effectively respond to man-made and naturally-occurring emergencies.</p>	Department prepared to respond to and recover from any emergency

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Strategic Investment	Description	Vision
Employee Professional Development	<p>Create and maintain a program that enhances each employee's career goals through all phases of professional development and, in support of that cause, protects and enhances institutional knowledge. Components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee development program to promote recruiting, hiring, retaining, advancing and rewarding staff. • Processes and resources to support staff as they face the job challenges and transition issues of aging. • Management development and training program to support employee career development and succession planning. • Methods and tools that increase depth of knowledge in Utilities and encourages information sharing among all levels of the organization. This includes developing processes, protocols and mentoring opportunities. <p>The result will be an organizational infrastructure that supports lifelong learning, better communication, staff development and knowledge sharing.</p>	Skilled, knowledgeable and accomplished staff
Structured Work Planning	<p>Develop a framework that improves work prioritization and planning to meet service delivery targets, advance the Strategic Investments and enhance job satisfaction.</p> <p>The framework will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A structured yet flexible method for determining priorities and assigning work. The method must be straightforward and relatively simple to apply so that Utilities can easily assess and respond to changing conditions. • Goals for service delivery and practical methods to measure performance of services provided. • Defined decision authority and responsibility in a manner that encourages leadership and practical risk taking. • A template for chartering intradepartmental teams that addresses such issues as team lead, team composition, goals, roles and responsibilities, and workload implications. <p>The framework will improve dialogue, interaction and linkages between/among divisions; provide the direction for optimizing resources; and, serve as a springboard for continued organizational development.</p>	Prioritized workload balanced against available resources and understood by all

Exceptional Public Services

We deliver outstanding service to the customer.

Value Description	General City Strategies	Additional Utilities Strategies
<p>We are committed to exceptional service for all of our customers. We demonstrate quality, caring, and sensitivity in every process, service and product we deliver. We value the contributions of citizens and partners. Our community can expect open, fair, consistent and responsive service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality services and products effectively and efficiently. • Provide the staffing and resources to enable quality levels of service. • Emphasize collaboration and teamwork. • Maintain effective public information processes. • Provide easy access to City services and products. • Use public involvement to connect with the community. • Deliver services in partnership with community organizations and citizens. • View customer feedback as essential. • Ensure accountability by reporting on performance. • Recognize the ethnic, economic and cultural diversity of the community, and provide alternative service modes to meet the differing needs of our residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to internal and external customers' needs with concern and commitment to fulfill those needs in a fair and consistent manner. • Provide on-going, two-way communication with all customers regarding Utilities' services, issues and priorities. • Make every human contact caring, courteous, dignified and pleasant. • Partner with other City departments to provide coordinated service delivery. • Dedicate ourselves to continuously improve services. • Plan for and provide Utilities' systems and services to meet the needs of current customers and future generations. • Empower decision making at all levels.

Commitment to Employees

We value all employees and their contributions and treat each other with caring and respect.

Value Description	General City Strategies	Additional Utilities Strategies
<p>The City invests in its employees and continually demonstrates how valuable each person is to the organization. We encourage and reward employee growth and development. We treat each other equitably and with caring respect and trust. We recognize each other's contributions. We build on our commonalities and our differences. We believe that investing in employees fosters good government and quality public service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster an organizational culture that attracts, nurtures and retains quality employees. • Hire employees who will live the Core Values. • Maintain staff resources to meet workload demands. • Provide the appropriate resources for employees to do a quality job. • Train employees to enhance personal and professional growth. • Enhance opportunities for internal promotion. • Foster open and honest interaction and communication among and between Council, Leadership Team, management and staff. • Constantly recognize each other's contributions. • Assume the best of others. • Conduct performance evaluations that are honest, fair, consistent, relevant and timely. • Publicize good work that the City and employees are doing. • Listen to and act on concerns and input voiced by employees. • Increase opportunities for celebration. • Recognize the need for balance between work and personal life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster an organization focused on cooperation, adaptability and flexibility. • Create an environment where employees support each other in the performance of their duties. • Provide an environment where employees are encouraged to express different ideas and opinions. • Train employees to prepare the organization to meet future needs and challenges. • Recognize and reward employee contributions to a successful organization – peer to peer, manager to employee, employee to manager. • Encourage employee mentoring to prepare the organization for leadership development and succession planning. • Provide challenging and interesting work to develop employee growth. • Provide consistent internal communications so that employees are aware of organizational needs and priorities, and have the opportunity to contribute ideas and provide feedback.

Stewardship

We preserve and enhance the community's environmental, financial, human and physical resources.

Value Description	General City Strategies	Additional Utilities Strategies
We provide diligent and visionary management of all of the community's resources: environmental, financial, human and physical. We accept the responsibility for enhancing and preserving our resources and for balancing competing needs. We value the public trust and recognize that today's decisions will determine tomorrow's community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the environment and long-term community interests. • Utilize proactive planning as an important community development resource. • Continually explore whether community resources are being used appropriately and whether future resources are being enhanced. • Use technology as appropriate to achieve the community's goals. • Communicate openly about resource issues. • Fix rules and policies that don't work. • Develop mechanisms to make decisions when resource conflicts arise. • Provide adequate resources into the future to maintain and operate existing community facilities and assets. • Embrace improvement and work smarter. • Be a regional player. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand regulations and practice procedures consistently. • Manage Utilities' assets for the long-term health of the infrastructure and the people served by it. • Manage Utilities' assets and programs to maintain the long-term affordability of services. • Ensure effective management of all resources, balancing our efforts so that Utilities' investments can consistently benefit environmental and human needs in our service area.



Core Values Appendix

Innovation

We encourage and reward ideas and solutions.

Value Description	General City Strategies	Additional Utilities Strategies
We encourage and reward proactive, creative problem solving, planning and service delivery. We continue our tradition of leadership. We are empowered to explore new ideas and introduce cutting-edge solutions. We support taking reasonable risks to find better ways to deliver our services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a free and open environment to brainstorm, incubate and hatch new ideas.• Provide a supportive means of evaluating new ideas for implementation. Empower employees to have more ownership in their work.• Collaborate within and outside the work group and department to plan, problem solve and create.• Focus on the work, not the “turf,” and be interdisciplinary in working together.• Involve those who should be involved.• Recognize that a diverse workforce enhances creativity.• Reward employees for innovative ideas that are implemented.• Accept risks and learn from our failures.• Glean innovative ideas from other organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constantly seek better ways to do everything.• Partner with others to better understand innovation opportunities.• Use innovation to help contain costs.• Conduct and use research (e.g., field studies, market) to target, plan and evaluate programs and services.

Integrity

We are trustworthy, truthful and ethical.

Value Description	General City Strategies	Additional Utilities Strategies
Our leadership is centered on sound principles. We behave ethically, honestly and fairly. We perform our work with steadfastness to truth, responsibility and open communication. We adhere to visible values that are consistent throughout the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live the City's core values. • Use Core Values to guide decision making. • Contribute to an environment that is safe for open and honest dialogue. • Receive open and honest communication in a positive way. • Give each other positive feedback. • Say what you do; do what you say. • Set clear expectations and send clear messages. • Solicit and welcome clarifying questions. • Give a consistent message to all audiences. • Take the risk to be honest. • Admit and take responsibility for mistakes. • Take responsibility to be part of the solution. • Commit to consensus decisions. • Measure how well the organization is implementing its Core Values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolute honesty, integrity and fairness guide all actions. • Provide a day's work for a day's pay. • Treat all people with dignity and respect. • Make decisions in the best interests of our customers, recognizing the needs of current and future customers • Conduct work in an open, full-disclosure manner. • Conduct work and provide services in a consistent, fair and predictable manner

Core Values Appendix

Safety

We value safety and security.

Value Description	General City Strategies	Additional Utilities Strategies
We are committed to the safety and security of our customers and employees. We employ safe practices with every process, service and product we deliver.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City integrates safety as a fundamental element of operations and programs, while Utilities prefers to emphasize safety and security as a unique core value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep the public safe by ensuring the safety, security, and continuity of our products and services.• Make employee safety and security a priority:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take time and resources to be safe/secure.• Train to ensure safety.• Ensure safe and secure workplaces and work practices.• Ensure the safety and security of all utility infrastructures.• Mitigate the impacts of potential emergencies or threats through preparedness, security, training and partnerships.



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